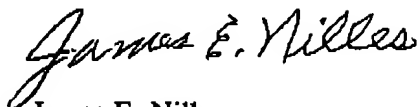


Preliminary Amendment – Hirota  
Serial No. 09/541,779  
Page 6 of 6

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-9 have been canceled, claims 10-17 have been added and claims 10-17 are pending in this application. No new matter has been added and reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to deduct any additional fees arising as a result of this Amendment or any other communication from Deposit Account No. 14-1080.

Respectfully submitted,



James E. Nilles  
Registration No. 16,663

Dated: April 30, 2001

NILLES & NILLES, S.C.  
777 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 2000  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
Telephone (414) 276-0977  
Facsimile (414) 276-0982

G:\Data\CLIENT\133\046\pa-2.doc